UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARIAT

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15 January 1963

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Plans for the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 1775 (XVII)).

4. Report of the Special Committee.

63-00881

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1. General Assembly resolution 1775 (XVII), adopted at the 1187th plenary meeting on 7 December 1962, reads as follows:[1/]

"The General Assembly,

Noting that 10 December 1963 will be the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption and proclamation by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations,

Taking into account the fact that, since the adoption of the Declaration, definite progress has been achieved in the affirmation and development of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and in the attainment of independence by a number of countries whose peoples had been under colonial rule,

Hoping that all States will implement General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, so that the fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will witness a decisive step forward in the liberation of all peoples,

Recognizing that, notwithstanding some progress, the situation regarding compliance with the recommendations made in the Declaration remains unsatisfactory in many parts of the world,

Recalling its resolution 217 D (III) of 10 December 1948, recommending Governments of Member States to show their adherence to Article 56 of the Charter of the United Nations by using every means within their power solemnly to publicize the text of the Declaration,

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1/ A summary of the discussion in the Third Committee which preceded the adoption of resolution 1775 (XVII) will be found in document A/5314, paras. 53-67.

Bearing in mind its resolution 423 (V) of 4 December 1950, inviting all States and interested organizations to adopt 10 December of each year as Human Rights Day,

Bearing in mind that the application of suitable measures to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration might further promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, as enunciated in the Declaration,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Committee to prepare plans for the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including suggestions as to forms which the celebration might take and as to information materials which would be useful at the national and local levels, and to consult with the appropriate authorities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other specialized agencies concerned in the preparation of such plans, as well as with interested non-governmental organizations in consultative status;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to present these plans to the Commission on Human Rights at its nineteenth session."

2. The attention of the interested specialized agencies, of UNICEF, and of the competent non-governmental organizations has been drawn to resolution 1775 (XVII), and they have been invited to participate in the work of the Special Committee.

3. The Committee may wish to bear in mind, as a useful basis for its work, the plans for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights approved by the Commission on Human Rights at its thirteenth session, which are set out in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 651 (XXIV).

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The Secretary-General has received the following communication from the International Telecommunication Union, and has the honour to transmit it to the Committee:

"1. We have studied with great interest your letter of 3 January 1963 and resolution 1775 (XVII) of the General Assembly, regarding the preparation of plans for the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption and proclamation by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2. You will no doubt appreciate that it is rather difficult for us to make any concrete proposals for the celebration of this event at this stage, particularly before we have had an opportunity of discussing the matter with the other agencies. All we can say is that, certainly, the telecommunication world in general and the telecommunication administrations of our Member countries in particular, will wholeheartedly favour any action stressing the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the light of the recommendations which will be made by the Special Committee and the conclusions of the Commission on Human Rights at its nineteenth session, we may even consider suggesting to the ITU Administrative Council, which is to meet in March/April 1963, that it adopt a resolution drawing the attention of all Members and Associate Members to resolution 1775 (XVII) of the General Assembly and recommending that they associate themselves with the manifestations which are likely to be organized in most countries to celebrate what might be called the Human Rights Day, on 10 December 1963.

3. Unfortunately we will not be able to send a representative to the meeting of the Special Committee on 17 January 1963. I would therefore request you to be so kind as to place these few observations before the Committee and to keep us informed about the results of the discussions for suitable action."

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLANS
FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The Secretary-General has received the following communication from the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and has the honour to transmit it to the Committee:

"... As my earlier cable will have informed you, I regret that it has not been possible to ensure Headquarters representation on this occasion.

"I shall draw the forthcoming Fifteenth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Preamble of which refers expressly to 'freedom from want', to the special attention of our Freedom from Hunger Campaign committees and of the non-governmental organizations supporting this campaign, asking them to give full support to the United Nations associations and others interested in the celebration of this anniversary. In addition a number of initiatives undertaken during the forthcoming World Freedom from Hunger Week, centred on 21 March 1963, might provide the basis for commemorations of the Fifteenth Anniversary. Full information on these initiatives is already being sent and a report will be forwarded to the United Nations following the Week's observance."

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLANS
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OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The Secretary-General has received the following statement from the Permanent Representative of Ceylon to the United Nations, and has the honour to transmit it, as requested, to the Committee:

Fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

"The delegation of Ceylon regards the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a unique opportunity to make a historic contribution to the evolution of human rights in our time.

Throughout the life of the United Nations, the question of human rights has been, by and large, a rather academic one. The fact that we are still talking about "The Declaration" and that the covenants are still in the drafting stage, is an indication of the rather disappointing tempo of progress in this field. A world in motion - indeed, in a revolutionary state of dynamic changes - can no longer be satisfied with mere "Declarations". The peoples of the world, everywhere, are looking for implementation of the rights we have enunciated in the various organs of the United Nations Organization.

Not only in the colonies and in the new States, but even in the most advanced countries, the rising tide is for action and concrete achievement. When these demands are frustrated, we begin to hear the rising and recurrent slogan that in this field the United Nations is only "a talking organization".

I do not mean to imply that there has been no implementation. Sometimes I think that there has been much of it, despite, rather than because of, the many

statements and resolutions issued in this field in the United Nations and its agencies. For instance, ILO and UNESCO have produced some interesting and promising results in draft and adopted conventions in this field. Only last week the Ceylon delegation received a UNESCO report to the Human Rights Commission on the convention now in force for the protection of human rights in the field of education. What was most interesting to me in the report is the draft protocol, unanimously adopted by the UNESCO Conference for the implementation of this convention.

There are many such conventions which contain one or another provision for implementation. On the other hand, there are many more which are no more than a grade above the Declaration species.

Actually, I believe we have virtually exhausted the academic formulations and Declarations. The urge and the impulse in the world is now for enforcement. Take, for example, the Declaration on Colonialism. It was hardly one year old before the Assembly set up the Committee of Seventeen - now twenty-four - to do something about the Declaration, and I need hardly speak of the satisfactory results already achieved.

My point is that we should make this celebration not only a paean of praise to the past, but, much more, a keynote to the future. The celebration, I would like to urge, should be a bold, dynamic thrust into the future. And just as we have given lagging economic progress a great forward spurt with the theme of the Decade of Development, we might, taking a lesson from this, celebrate the occasion by launching 'A Decade of Implementation of Human Rights'."